Central Funds to Orissa under Rural Area Connectivity Programme

386. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have provided any financial assistance to the State Government of Orissa to make the bridges in Kalahandi and Naupara districts under the rural area connectivity programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether the major bridges over river Sunder and the bridge over river Tel have also been taken up under the programme;

(d) if so, the names of other bridges which are under construction by the above fund; and

(e) the time by which the construction work of the bridges is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNAIDU) :, (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Electrification of Erode-Ernakulam Railway Line

387. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the present status of the electrification of Erode-Ernakulam Railway line; and

(b) the expenditure incurred thereon so far?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) The work of electrification between Erode-Shoranur/Vallattolnagar of the Erode-Ernakulam railway line has already been completed in March'97, and the work on the remaining portion of the above line has been taken up.

(b) Rs. 99.36 Crores have been spent on this project upto March' 97.

Contaminated Drinking Water in Indo-Bangladesh Region

388. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the worst arsenic contamination of drinking water in the Indo-Bangladesh region which is turing worse;

(b) if so, whether the World Health Organisation (WHO) has sounded an alarm to India ; and

(c) if so, the steps the Government are going to take on the recommendations of WHO on arsenic toxicity of water?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATARAMAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. However, the World Health Organisation (WHO) organised a Regional consultation at New Delhi from 29th April to 1st May, 1997 involving representatives from Government, Scientists, United Nations and other donor agencies to provide guidance and prepare action plans to tackle the problem.

(c) Steps have been taken for holding trainers workshop, field training for water quality analysis, development of arsenic testing kits, National level workshop, creation of mass awareness and district level training in West Bengal under the Government of India/WHO collaborative programme.

Besides these, the Ministry of Rural Affairs and Employment had reported that the Government of West Bengal has prepared a perspective plan of long and short term measures to tackle arsenic contamination at a cost of Rs.750 cororeS. Several research and development projects have been sanctioned by that Ministry under the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission.

The Central Ground Water Board has also undertaken surveys and a R & D project in some affected areas of West Bengal.

Corruption cases against Civil Servants

389. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of corruption, dishonesty and assets disproportionate to the income of civil servants investigated by the Vigilance Department of Ministry in 1995-96;

(b) the number of officers found involved therein, Grad-wise;

(c) the number of complaints received against corruption and dishonesty in 1995-96 and the action taken thereon;

(d) whether the Vigilance Department initiate action *suo-moto* against the staff suspected to be dishonest and corrupt;

(e) if so, whether any review of the functioning of powers of the vigilance section is proposed to be made; and